

IN THE FAULKNER CIRCUIT COURT  
3rd DIVISION

STATE OF ARKANSAS

v.

MICHELLE LEA STATON

128 Pine Valley Road  
Conway, AR 72034

DOB 11/25/1978  
RACE W  
SEX Female

Z3  
NO. CR-15-706

FILED  
PLAINTIFF

2015 SEP 17 PM 4 21

RHONDA WHARTON DEFENDANT

BY [Signature] SC

FELONY INFORMATION

Cody Hiland, Prosecuting Attorney of the Twentieth Judicial District of Arkansas, in the name and by the authority, and on behalf of the State of Arkansas charges Michelle Lea Staton with the crime(s) of HINDERING APPREHENSION OR PROSECUTION (8/12/2005 AND THEREAFTER) as follows:

COUNT 1: HINDERING APPREHENSION OR PROSECUTION (8/12/2005 AND THEREAFTER) ARK. CODE ANN. § 5-54-105.

The said defendant in FAULKNER COUNTY, did unlawfully and feloniously on or about July 22, 2015, with the purpose to hinder the apprehension, prosecution, conviction or punishment of another for an offense, he volunteered false information to a law enforcement officer,

Thereby committing the offense of HINDERING APPREHENSION OR PROSECUTION (8/12/2005 AND THEREAFTER), said offense being a CLASS B FELONY against the peace and dignity of the State of Arkansas.

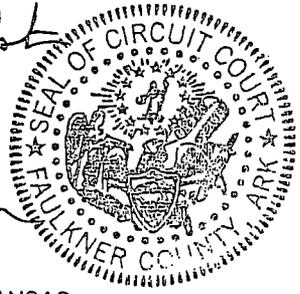
CODY HILAND  
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

By [Signature]

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 17 day of Sept, 2015.

RHONDA WHARTON  
Circuit Clerk

By: [Signature]  
Deputy Circuit Clerk



TO THE CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAULKNER COUNTY, ARKANSAS

Based upon the sworn testimony of Det. Mike Welsh and other materials presented therewith, I am satisfied that there is probable cause to believe that the offense alleged in the above Felony Information was committed by the person above described and that there exist probable cause for the issuance of a Warrant for Arrest.

Dated this 17 day of SEPTEMBER, 2015.

[Signature]  
JUDGE

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S  
FORM AFFIDAVIT  
Cody Hiland  
Prosecuting Attorney  
Faulkner County

Date: 9/17/2015

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF FAULKNER COUNTY, ARKANSAS  
AFFIDAVIT FOR WARRANT OF ARREST FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSON

POTENTIAL DEFENDANT'S NAME: Michelle Lea Staton  
ADDRESS: 128 Pine Valley Road, Conway, AR 72034  
Race: W Sex: F DOB:11-25-78 SID#: DL#: 919543820

Pursuant to Rule 7.1 of the Arkansas Rules of Criminal Procedure, the undersigned Affiant(s) duly sworn deposes and states that he has reason to believe that the above named person has committed the offense(s) of violating Arkansas Code Section,

Charge 1: Hindering Apprehension or Prosecution (B-felony)

On or about July 22, 2015 in Faulkner County Arkansas, and against the peace and dignity of the State of Arkansas.

**FACTS CONSTITUTING PROBABLE CAUSE**

Sgt. Mike Welsh's report:

On Wednesday, July 21, 2015, Officers responded to 4803 Quail Run regarding a welfare concern call. It was relayed to the police department that Robert Cogdell did not show up for work or call to say that he would not be coming in. Patrol officers and detectives responded. Upon arrival, officers entered the house to check on Robert and Pat Cogdell. Officers found a large amount of blood in the hallway in front of the master bedroom. Officers also found a vehicle in the garage with a broken passenger side door window and blood in the front passenger seat. A search of the property was then conducted. Robert and Pat Cogdell's bodies were found inside the wood line on the west side of the property. They appeared to have been shot multiple times. A white Toyota Tundra truck belonging to Robert Cogdell was discovered missing from the house.

During the execution of a search warrant of the Cogdell residence, Det. Brad Fornash and I proceeded to 128 Pine Valley Road, Conway. We had received information that Justin's mother, Michelle Staton, lived at this address and Justin had recently commented to a family member that he would soon be living with her. Upon our arrival, we were met in the driveway by Justin's grandfather (Michelle's dad). Randy Staton advised that his grandson was in the house. When we asked to speak to Justin, Randy advised us that an arrest would be made. We asked if Justin admitted to being involved in the death of Robert and Pat, he said yes. Randy handed me a piece of paper with the name, Hunter Drexler, and advised that this is the name of the other responsible person. We entered the house and placed Justin into custody. The missing white Toyota truck was found hidden behind a workshop next to Randy and Michelle's house. The vehicle was towed by Steve's Auto and secured on their property for a search warrant. Shortly after Justin's arrest, interviews were conducted with Randy Staton, Abe Heflin and Alexis Mitchell. Randy is Justin's grandfather. Alexis is Justin's sister and Abe is the boyfriend of Justin's mother, Michelle.

Det. Brad Fornash interviewed Randy Staton. Randy said Justin and several friends had come to his residence on the night of 07/21/2015, and he did not want them there so a male named Abe Heflin took them to a hotel for the night. Randy said on 07/22/2015, he went to work and he was called to come

home around 0930 hrs. Randy said when he came home he learned that Justin's grandparent had been killed the previous night and Justin was involved with the murders. Randy said they started to call the Police but they were trying to contact a lawyer first, Randy said Justin told him that he did not want to turn himself in. Randy said Justin told him they were at the Cogdell's residence and he began arguing with his grandparents over guns and this is when Hunter Drexler shot and killed his grandfather and grandmother. Justin Staton told Randy that he helped dispose of his grandparents bodies in the woods behind their residence.

The following is a summary of the interview I (Sgt. Mike Welsh) conducted with Michelle Staton later this same evening. I advised her of her Miranda Rights in writing. She advised that she understood each right and signed the rights form. I asked her about her conversations with Justin immediately after his arrival to her home. She stated that he did not confess any knowledge until the next morning. She advised that he first told her daughter, Alexis. She said she asked Justin about one of the males who accompanied him to her home. She said that Justin told her that the male (Hunter) brought several guns to the house and they were looking at them on Justin's bed when Robert and Pat arrived. Justin told her that Robert and Pat were in the hallway complaining when Hunter "unloaded some kind of clip", meaning that he shot several bullets from the gun. She advised that Justin told her that he shut his eyes and shot one time, not knowing if his bullet hit anyone. She asked Justin if this incident was planned. Justin told her that the guns belong to Hunter's dad. Justin advised her that they hid the bodies. She did not say who hid the bodies, only saying "they". This conversation between Justin and Michelle took place the next morning, after the murders. He told her that Robert and Pat were on vacation. Abe then escorted the two males and female to a hotel. She described the male who accompanied the female as having a beard. Michelle was told all of this information in the morning, after Justin told Alexis. She advised that some of them arrived in a white truck that looks like one owned by Robert. Hunter advised that he owned the white truck. Michelle also advised that she packed up Justin's clothing, except for his shoes. She advised that his shoes had blood on them. When asked why the police department was not contacted as soon as she learned what happened, she stated that they were busy trying to find an attorney. I asked if she considered whether or not Robert or Pat could still be alive and need of medical attention. She answered that she had not thought of that scenario. She advised that Hunter seemed to be the leader of the group. Michelle advised that she examined the truck and noticed that it was clean, not like something a kid would drive. She said that Robert and Pat kept their vehicles very clean. She then confronted them about this being Robert and Pat's truck. She took the keys but later returned them to Justin. Michelle advised that she fled the house when Det. Fornash and I arrived at her home because she did not want to be arrested on her warrants. Before the interview ended, she advised that one of the other three (Hunter, girl or bearded male) shot Robert again. She could not say which one. After the interview, she was escorted to the Faulkner County jail due to outstanding unrelated warrants. While Michelle was in the Faulkner County Detention Center, she called her father, Randy Staton, and told him to make sure he got rid of Justin's clothes that she had bagged before the police could get them. Randy Staton advised he had already turned those over to the police.

On July 22, 2015, Inv. Tom Kennedy interviewed juvenile Alexis Mitchell at Conway PD in interview room 2. Alexis was a witness to statements made by Justin Staton. Mitchell said that Staton was her brother.

Mitchell said that Staton arrived at her "Grandpa Randy's" on July 21, 2015 at approximately 11:30 PM. When he arrived, there were three other individuals with him. She recalled that one individual was named "Hunter", and described him as a white male with curly blonde hair, was thin, but had some muscle to him. One individual was an unknown white male; he had a beard, glasses, was skinny and tall, and had dark brown, medium length, wavy hair. The last individual was an unknown white female. She had long, dark brown, straight hair (that was up in a bun), a piercing in the center of her bottom lip, brown eyes, was probably 16 or 17 years old, and was wearing a red, green, and yellow parka. Also present while the 4 subjects came were her grandfather, Randy Staton (Grandpa Randy) a younger brother, London, and an adult male identified as "Abe."

She said that the group of kids wanted to spend the night, but her Grandpa Randy would not allow it. Abe tried to help find a hotel room because none of them were 18. It was determined at some point that not everyone would sleep at Randy's home, so "Abe" went with "Hunter" and the unknown male and female to get a hotel room in Conway. Alexis said that "Abe" stayed with them at the hotel to make sure he didn't get screwed over. In the morning, Alexis noticed that the Cogdell truck was also there and

there were random items in the back of the truck. She initially thought the items were stolen, but then said that the items were "probably all from Pat and Robert's house, and probably most of his clothes."

On the morning of July 22, 2015, at approximately 07:30 to 08:00 AM, Justin woke Alexis up. He told her that he had done something bad. He then described to her being at the Cogdell residence with Hunter. He told her that they were sitting on the bed, and they had guns lying out, and all the guns were Justin's dad's guns. At some point during this, Pat and Robert Cogdell came home and they "started bitching him out." Hunter told Justin that "we could just kill them", to which Justin thought was a joke. Some time period after this statement, Hunter began "firing shots first", and Justin admitted to her that he fired a weapon "one time." Justin told her he did not know if he hit anyone or not. Justin also told her that Hunter "emptied a whole clip." At this point, the other 2 subjects (the unidentified white male and female) came to the shooting location. After this, they took Hunter's truck and the Cogdell's truck and purchased a phone, phone cards, and water.

When they all showed up, they were in Hunter's Tahoe and the Cogdell's white truck. She said that Justin knew Hunter from drug court, and the other two kids may possibly live in Greenbrier, but she did not know. She then told me again about "Abe" getting the hotel room the night prior.

At this point, she told me that she kind of guessed the whole incident, because "on his shoe, or whatever..... he had had some.....what he said was mud.....looked like blood, and...I don't...and there was a few splatters on his shirt...from I guess moving him around and trying to get him put off somewhere." She said again that Justin woke her up this morning and told her about what happened. She said that they had been trying to find a lawyer, and that was probably how we (the police) found out about it.

At this point, I obtained physical descriptions of Hunter and the other 2 subjects. The descriptions are entered above.

I asked her about any bags being carried and she said that Justin had a backpack, that was part of Hunter's dad's guns, and it was placed back in the truck. She said while Justin was confessing everything, he opened the backpack and she could see two pistols. She said they put the guns back in the white truck that belonged to the Cogdell's. She then went back and said the bag was put in Grandpa Randy's room, and the guns were handled by others in the house. She said that she was pretty sure that Grandpa Randy placed the bag back in the truck, and then parked the truck around back. She described the back pack as army camo. She had never seen the back pack prior but thought that the back pack belonged to Hunter.

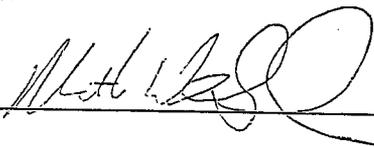
I asked her to describe Hunter's vehicle, and she said it was a Tahoe, was grey or tan, but did not have any more identifying information on the vehicle.

I assisted Detective Ault with the search warrant affidavit for the white truck owned by the Cogdell's.

Officer Gordon Ball and I went to several area hotels looking for Hunter's Tahoe with no success.

According to information I received through interviews conducted with Randy Staton, Michelle Staton, and Alexis Mitchell, the family knew that Justin and Hunter were involved in the death of Robert and Pat Cogdell. The murders took place at approximately 7:30 pm to 7:45 pm on July 21, 2015. Randy (Justin's grandfather) and Michelle (Justin's mother) learned of the deaths no later than Wednesday morning, July 22 at approximately 9:30 am. Det. Fornash and I did not arrive at Randy and Michelle's home to contact Justin until sometime around 4:15 pm. Randy handed me the piece of paper with Hunter Drexler's name as soon as we arrived. This means that for approximately 7 hours, Hunter Drexler, Conner Atchley and Anastasia Roberts had time to flee the area and state in their attempts to hide from this investigation and pending arrest. When asked why the police department was not contacted as soon as they realized what happened, Randy and Michelle both responded that they were attempting to find an attorney for Justin. Bloody clothing worn by Justin Staton when he arrived at Randy and Michelle's house was packaged in two Ziploc bags prior to our arrival. During a recorded jailhouse conversation between Michelle and her father, Randy, Michelle told Randy to have Abe remove these bags. Randy told Michelle that officers already had the bags of clothes.

Affiant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Print Name: Sgt. Mike Welsh

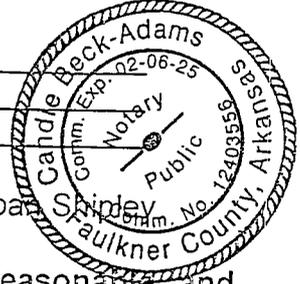
Address: 1105 Prairie Street, Conway, AR 72032 Phone: (501) 450-6130

State of Arkansas  
County of Faulkner

SUBSCRIBED and SWORN to before me this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2015

Carrie Beck-Adams  
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission expires: 2-6-2025



Prosecutor Accepting Charges: Cody Hiland, Hugh Finklestein, Joan Shipley

I hereby find that this sworn affidavit demonstrates reasonable and probable cause for the issuance of Warrant of Arrest for the above named Defendant, for the above stated offense(s).

(SEAL)

Judge: [Signature]

DATE: 9-17-15